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# KYRGYZSTAN PARLIAMENTARY STRENGTHENING PROGRAM (KPSP)

END OF YEAR TWO ANNUAL REPORT



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Cover photo: JK MPs attending the NCSL Legislative Summit, Chicago, Illinois, USA, August 4-10, 2012.  
Photo: KPSP.

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# PARLIAMENTARY CONTEXT

Year Two of KPSP implementation took place in a relatively peaceful and stable political environment. Kyrgyzstan's presidential elections on October 30, 2011, which brought President Almazbek Atambaev to office, influenced, but did not eclipse the ongoing work and activities of the Kyrgyz Parliament – the Jogorku Kenesh (JK). The previously adopted parliamentary centric system proved to be an efficient political system supported by and based on pluralism, diversity and sharing of power. Five political parties [factions] that had overcome in October 2010 both the nationally and regionally required thresholds to acquire seats in the JK initiated and sponsored numerous legislative bills in the economic, social, and judicial sectors and continued consolidating democratic and parliamentary reforms. The representation of parties in the JK remained unchanged: Ata Jurt had 28 seats, the Social Democratic Party of Kyrgyzstan (SDPK) had 26 seats, Ar Namys had 25 seats, Respublika had 23 seats, and Ata Meken had 18 seats. Overall, 120 MPs exclusively elected from party lists serve in the JK.

The previously established in December 2010 ruling majority coalition consisting of Ata Jurt, SDPK, and Respublika fell in December 2011 after Mr. Atambaev won the presidential election and SDPK left the coalition. A new majority coalition, “Birimdik”, was established and composed of Ar Namys, Ata Meken, SDPK, and Respublika with Ata Jurt in opposition. The leader of Respublika became Prime Minister with working control of the various Kyrgyz executive branch ministries, departments and agencies divided among the majority coalition. The Deputy Speaker from SDPK became the JK Speaker with each faction receiving a Deputy Speaker post. However, the majority coalition “Birimdik” on August 22, 2012 also fell when Ata Meken and Ar Namys announced that they were leaving the coalition because of disagreements with Prime Minister Omurbek Babanov. The creation of a new coalition took only one week and was announced on September 3, 2012. The new majority coalition included Ar Namys, Ata Meken and SDPK with Respublika and Ata Jurt in opposition. The Head of the President's Office, Jantoro Satybaldiev, became the newly appointed Prime Minister, whereas the JK Speaker, Asylbek Jeenbekov (SDPK), retained his post.

In Year Two, 16 legislative committees, formerly established in December 2010, were downsized to 13 in January 2012 with each committee having no more than three members from each faction. This number of legislative committees remained unchanged in September 2012, when the committee structure was reconsidered, with two key committees (Budget and Finance and Law Enforcement) chaired by opposition factions according to constitutional mandate.

According to amended Rules of Procedure of the JK effective from December 2, 2011, plenary sessions were held on Wednesdays and Thursdays with committee sittings and other forums held primarily on Mondays and Tuesdays. Fridays and weekends were utilized by the factions for outreach to and contact with constituents. The JK recessed from July 2, 2012, through August 31, 2012, although special faction sessions were held in the second and third weeks of August 2012 due to disagreements with the Prime Minister's work and the consequent decision of Ata Meken and Ar Namys to leave the majority coalition. All factions were fully engaged and involved in the work of the JK.

# OVERVIEW

The Kyrgyzstan Parliamentary Strengthening Program (KPSP) is a three-year technical assistance initiative funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and implemented by Development Alternatives, Inc. (DAI). Phase 1 consisted of completion of a parliamentary assessment, design of a parliamentary strengthening program, and limited implementation of activities during the six-month period from October 1, 2010, through March 31, 2011. Phase 2 is a full-scale parliamentary strengthening program during the 2.5-year period from April 1, 2011, to September 30, 2013.

In daily implementation of its activities, the KPSP is guided by three main principles. First, the KPSP serves as a coordinator and facilitator creating synergies and linkages between the JK and other USAID and USG funded assistance programs. In this manner, the KPSP maintains close communications and cooperation with other international donor programs to improve overall macro results and avoid duplication of activities thereby better utilizing limited donor program funds. Second, in all of its activities, the KPSP adopts and takes a non-political, non-partisan approach in programmatic activities and attendant relations with JK factions. This approach advantageously positions the KPSP to produce solid results through achieving Program deliverables while also engendering the uniform professional trust and good will of the Speaker and Vice-Speakers, faction leaders, committee chairs, and rank and file MPs. Third, KPSP programming is flexible, adaptable, and responsive to JK requests, initiatives, and needs. This responsiveness and timeliness sets the KPSP favorably apart from other international donor programs who frequently base their programming solely (or almost solely) on what they believe is best for the host country institution(s) they are assisting. USAID often refers to the KPSP as its “flagship” Program in Kyrgyzstan and has frequently emphasized that the Program is very closely watched at high levels within USAID, the US Department of State, and US National Security Council.

During its first quarter of Year Two (the fifth quarter of the Program), the KPSP continued implementation of programmatic activities through trainings, public forums, policy seminars, and field hearings relating to legislative process and procedure, committee strengthening, parliamentary information dissemination, and human resources management. As the main information link between USAID, the US Government, and the JK, the KPSP made concerted efforts to keep its US counterparts informed through, for example, preparing a memo on the interrelationship between the Kyrgyz presidential election and its effects on the continuation or reformation of the JK majority coalition, which was disseminated among USAID and US Embassy staff, and briefed officials from USAID Bishkek, Almaty, and Washington DC, the US Embassy in Kyrgyzstan and the US Department of State. Component 1 focused on linguistic issues in legislative drafting and began work to prepare a glossary of legal terms to standardize the translation from Russian into Kyrgyz in legislative drafting. Component 2 engaged on economically and socially important issues, and, together with partner committees in the JK, conducted four public forums on education, simplifying Kyrgyz passport issuance, public-private partnership, and employment for persons with disabilities. During the first quarter of Year Two, the KPSP included the JK Committee on International Affairs and Inter-Parliamentary Cooperation into KPSP programming making a total of four JK KPSP partner committees. The main activity under Component 3 was preparation of a bi-weekly Parliamentary Brief in Kyrgyz, Russian, and English. Twenty-six separate editions of the Parliamentary Brief were prepared and received by 139 persons/entities overall. Attention was also paid to capacity building and creation of mutually beneficial professional relations between the JK Press Service and accredited parliamentary journalists. Component 3 also began an initiative to provide journalists with thrice daily information updates on JK activities through incoming cell phone text messages. Component 4 conducted trainings on conflict and stress management for JK staff starting a six-month series of human resources management training sessions aimed at creating more capable, professional, and resilient parliamentary supervisors and employees.

During its second quarter of Year Two (the sixth quarter of the Program), the KPSP gained further momentum and helped implement numerous activities and initiatives and conducted 14 programmatic events attended by 796 persons (323 of these were women) including 46 MPs (25 of these were female



MPs). Large-scale activities under Component 2 included supporting JK legislative committee initiatives covering a broad area of topics such as: tourism development, water resources protection, inter-ethnic relations, and education policy reforms. Component 1 continued its work on the glossary of legal terms and conducted a seminar on standardizing terminology in Kyrgyz for legislative drafting, a seminar on legislative calendar planning and oversight of adopted laws, and training on legislative drafting, analysis, and process. With an international STTA assisting, the KPSP paid great attention to the development of communications strategies and constituent relations and parliamentary communications skills among MPs, the JK Press Service, and various JK sub division staff. Component 3 prepared 21 additional separate editions of the Parliamentary Brief in Kyrgyz, Russian, and English covering JK activities this quarter received by 250 persons/entities in total. Under Component 4, the KPSP conducted two trainings for JK committee and faction staff, MPs, consultants, and assistants on time, conflict, workload, and stress management. In addition, five US Congressmen and US House of Representatives staff visited the Kyrgyz Parliament during the quarter with the KPSP rendering full support and assistance with these visits.

During its third quarter of Year Two (the seventh quarter of the Program), implementation of KPSP Components 1, 2, 3, and 4 was enunciated with a large number of events successfully implemented together with the main partners and beneficiaries of each component. In total, the KPSP conducted 23 programmatic events attended by 995 persons (322 of these were women) including 51 MPs (17 of these were female MPs). The KPSP also provided an update on programming component goals and their supporting activities and events to the JK Speaker, a JK Deputy Speaker, and a Deputy Head of the JK Administration during a Donor Coordination Meeting, which produced positive feedback and appreciation of KPSP efforts. Activities under Component 1 concentrated on coordination of legislative activities among the three branches of government and started with a Coordination Meeting on Legislative Drafting for the JK, the Prime Minister's Office, the President's Office, and the Ministry of Justice followed by training on Legislative Drafting, Analysis, and Process and training on Anti-Corruption Analysis in Legislative Drafting. Component 2 was again effective in organizing large-scale events attracting broad public interest in discussing such pressing issues as Vocational Education, Protecting the Cultural Heritage of Kyrgyzstan, Kurultay vs. Parliament, Veterinary Medicine, and the development of Free Economic Zones in Kyrgyzstan. Component 3 was again mainly active in preparation of the Parliamentary Brief and also held a joint training for parliamentary journalists and JK Press Service staffers aimed at improving the work product of both groups. JK human resource development was covered by Component 4, under which training on workload, time, conflict, and stress management was conducted for MP Consultants and Assistants and three separate training sessions on Effective Supervision of Subordinates for three different groups of JK Staff exercising supervisory duties. Two international consultants, whom the KPSP contracted in this quarter, successfully completed presentations for JK committee and Administration staff on Making Committee Hearings More Effective, on Separation of Powers and Checks and Balances, and on Legislative Oversight Mechanisms. In addition, jointly with NDI, the KPSP organized a presentation on Press Secretary Skills, Political Marketing, and Public Relations for JK Press Service, committee, and Administration staff.

During its fourth quarter of Year 2 (the eighth quarter of the Program), the implementation of Components 1, 2, 3, and 4 continued forward despite the JK's July 2, 2012, through August 31, 2012, summer recess. The KPSP held a legislative drafting coordination seminar for the JK Administration, the Prime Minister's Office, the President's Office, and the Ministry of Justice. Also, under Component 1, five MPs, including two Vice-Speakers and a Deputy Head of the JK Administration, traveled on a Study Tour to the United States to attend the National Conference of State Legislatures Annual Legislative Summit held in Chicago, Illinois August 5 – 10 and then visit the Iowa General Assembly hosted by the Iowa Legislative Services Agency in Des Moines, Iowa August 11 – 14. Component 2 actively prepared a Study Tour to Mongolia to take place during the first week of October 2012. The goal of further committee strengthening beckoned sending 10 MPs, representing five different JK Committees, to visit Ulan-Bator and the Mongolian Parliament, rated as one of the strongest in former communist bloc countries. Component 3 drafted and disseminated seven additional separate editions of the Parliamentary Brief with 270 persons/entities now in receipt. Under Component 4, the KPSP continued to provide an embedded trainer/mentor to assist the JK Human Resources Division.

In addition, the KPSP prepared four success stories and submitted them to USAID. Two success stories were published on the USAID website and in regular USAID newsletters. Also, the KPSP prepared two new (2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>) editions of the KPSP newsletter covering programming during KPSP Phase 2 and disseminated them to all 120 MPs and the JK Administration.

# PROGRAM MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

During Year Two, KPSP Program Management and Administration kept the Program on an even keel moving forward in a smooth fashion despite facing occasional challenges.

During its first quarter of Year Two, uncertainty was palpable after Kyrgyzstan's holding of presidential elections in October 2011 saw the JK ruling coalition dissolve and reform, the resignation of the then JK Speaker and the subsequent nomination and approval of a new Speaker, and the division of executive branch ministries, agencies, and services amongst the new majority coalition. In this situation, Component 4 found it difficult to implement events and trainings given that many JK staff were unsure of their long-term stability and tenure in their positions. Despite this uncertainty, two major trainings on human resources were held and attended by a significant number of JK sub division staff and committee department experts. These trainings in this face of this uncertainty were held mainly in part to the KPSP's favorable reputation with the JK Administration and its sub divisions. Also, a continual flow of officials from USAID and the US Department of State were accommodated in being given tours of the JK building as well as in setting official meetings again due to close relations the KPSP enjoys with the JK Administration and its sub divisions.

KPSP staff attended trainings concerning the proper use of the DAI TAMIS system and DAI Field Accounting System given by STTAs Aaron Gillman and Vahe Sahakyan. The PMP was also updated. Furthermore, Aijan Sharshenova, Outreach & Events Coordinator, left the KPSP in September 2011 to pursue her PhD studies at the University of Leeds in the United Kingdom. Ksenia Barsova, who previously worked for the USAID Regional Trade Liberalization and Customs Project in communications and outreach was hired as a replacement and started her work on October 15, 2011.

During its second quarter of Year Two, in association with the dissolution and reformation of the majority JK coalition taking place in December 2011, the identity of the JK Press Service Head changed three times between December 2011 and February 8, 2012, with the last change occurring while STTA Christopher Shields was in country with his scope of work envisioning assisting the JK Press Service. Fortunately, enough continuity existed between the individuals occupying this important position and JK Press Service staff, who have a close relationship with the KPSP that Component 3 continued successfully forward simultaneously issuing the Parliamentary Brief and conducting various capacity building trainings for JK Press Service staff, other JK staff, and accredited parliamentary journalists.

Recognition and tangible evidence for the KPSP's positive role in assisting and strengthening the JK manifested itself out of the numerous and frequent requests from nearly every JK committee, department, and sub division for inclusion in the Program. This strong institutional support from the JK Speaker, Vice Speakers, rank and file MPs, and the JK Administration consistently reduces problems or issues that would otherwise arise. However, due to the overwhelming desire for KPSP assistance, it was a continual challenge to prioritize and stay working within the realms of Components 1, 2, 3, and 4, especially given limited KPSP staffing resources.

KPSP staff was intensively working during this period overcoming deadlines, long work hours, and attendant stress, while successfully conducting 14 separate programmatic events along with other initiatives and activities. The KPSP persevered to continue offering the JK high quality work by staying maximally organized, flexible, far seeing, and able to properly prioritize. From a programmatic standpoint, the desire for increased partnership between the KPSP and JK and more committee events and capacity trainings is a pleasant challenge to manage.

New employment agreements for KPSP employers for Phase 2 Year Two, covering April 1, 2012 through March 31, 2013, were also drafted and approved by the DAI Home Office Legal Division. Thus, the new employment agreements were concluded on April 1, 2012, without delay in compliance with Kyrgyz employment law.

During the third quarter of Year Two, 23 programmatic events were held with JK partners. Despite the heavy schedule stemming from a flood of requests from every corner of the JK and its sub divisions, the KPSP was implemented in a smooth fashion including holding field hearings, providing capacity building trainings on professional development, and staffing a mentor with the JK Human Resources Division.

Two ccn STTAs contributed to KPSP staff's ability to handle and implement such a large number of events.

First, ccn STTA Chinara Kasmambetova assisted with Component 2 organizing field hearings of JK committees and their partners. With these committee partners, two separate committee field hearings were held in Osh as well as a round table in Batken with a site visit to the "Leylek" Free Economic Zone.

Second, ccn STTA Cholpon Kasymbek kyzy, acted as Temporary Component 3 Leader, which allowed two KPSP staff members to work on Component 1. Because of this assistance, Component 1 was extremely active in conducting major trainings on legislative drafting and analysis, improving coordination between those involved with legislative drafting, and made significant progress in preparing a comprehensive glossary of legal and other terms, which will standardize the translation of legislative proposals from Russian to Kyrgyz.

The KPSP organized a tour of the JK building, its committees, and its leaders for Todd Sorenson, USAID Deputy Director for South Central Asian Countries, on April 5 and Nisha Biswal, USAID Assistant Administrator for Asia, during the week of May 21. Both were briefed by KPSP staff on Program efforts and activities aimed at strengthening the Parliament.

During its fourth quarter of Year Two, the components, with the exception of the immediately below mentioned Study Tour, did not hold large trainings and/or events due to the JK being in recess from July through August. Because of this lack of activity, additional consultants were not needed thus freeing KPSP staff to be able to take their annual leave entirely or partially, which under Kyrgyz employment law is 28 calendar days per year for full time employees in non-hazardous occupations.

Planning and preparing for a Study Tour to the United States consisting of five MPs and a Deputy Head of the JK Administration was extremely exhausting for KPSP staff in terms of acquiring corresponding participant information and required documents so that the visa issuance process through TraiNet could go forward. USAID and the US Embassy Consulate Division greatly assisted the KPSP in relation to this process, thus allowing the participants to obtain A2 diplomatic visas rather than J1 visas.

The KPSP received from USAID obligations in the amount of \$370,000 on August 16, 2012, and \$919,235 on September 14, 2012, and the contract between USAID and DAI was fully funded to the ceiling amount of \$3,249,799.

The KPSP Year Three Work Plan was submitted on August 28, 2012, to USAID covering the period from October 1, 2012 through September 29, 2013.

# SUMMARY OF PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

## COMPONENT 1 – LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

The KPSP under this component aims at building the capacity of Parliament's key bodies and other state entities responsible for legislative processes and legislative drafting. The main target audience of the component consists of staffers of the JK Legal Department, Analysis Division, experts of standing committees, MP assistants and consultants, staffers of the Prime Minister's Legal Department, staffers of the President's Legal Department, and staffers of the Ministry of Justice. These persons are all involved at various stages in the legislative process. The KPSP also places importance on involvement in Component 1 from the executive branch and President's office in terms of legislative process and drafting events. In order to provide proper and focused assistance in strengthening the legislative process, it is important to include and engage all stakeholders involved in the legislative process chain. The executive branch submits 60-70% of the draft laws reviewed in Parliament while the President's office reviews all of Parliament's enacted bills and concurs with subsequent approval signatures or vetoes these bills. Thus, the KPSP additionally sets forth the goal of building and enhancing coordination between Parliament and other law-making units, such as the Prime Minister's Office, the President's Office, and the Ministry of Justice, as well as improving the quality of rules and regulations regulating ministries and state agencies.



*Coordination Meeting on Legislative Planning and Drafting held at the Kyrgyz Government May 11, 2012.  
Photo: GKR.*

Under Component 1 in total during Year Two, 13 separate capacity building and other events, attended in aggregate by 337 participants from the JK, the Prime Minister's Office, the President's Office, the Ministry of Justice's senior and junior staff, and 9 MPs, were organized and held. The gender ratio was composed of 209 men to 128 women. These events consisted of<sup>1</sup>:

- Five consultations and briefings to USAID, US Department of State, and US Embassy in Kyrgyzstan senior officials on political and legal issues relating to the Parliament and organization of site visits to the Parliament building for Pamela Spratlen – US Ambassador to Kyrgyzstan, Robert Blake – US Assistant Secretary of State, Gavin Helf – USAID Democracy and

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<sup>1</sup> For each event held during Year Two under Components 1, 2, 3, and 4, the KPSP prepared an individual description of the event describing the topic(s) discussed, who participated, and the results. In addition, information on each event is also contained in corresponding KPSP Year Two Quarterly Progress Reports and Weekly Updates.

Governance Advisor for Central and South Asia, Denise Rollins – USAID Senior Deputy Assistant Administrator for the Asia Bureau, Erin McKee – USAID Regional Director for Central Asia, Lawrence Held - USAID Deputy Director for Kyrgyzstan, Richard Stoddard – of EUR/ACE, Michael Latham – Political and Economic Officer for the US Embassy in Kyrgyzstan, and Eric Rudenshoild – Desk Officer for Kyrgyzstan and Central Asian Countries for USAID Washington ;

- Two trainings on Legislative Process, Procedure, and Drafting with 53 participants attending - MP consultants and assistants, JK committee department staff, Legal Department and Analysis Division staff;
- One training on Anticorruption Analysis with 25 participants attending - staffers from the JK Legal and Specialized Analysis Division, JK Legal Department, JK Anti-Corruption Division, JK committee departments, the President's Administration, the Ministry of Justice, and the Anti-Corruption Service of the State National Security Committee;
- Two policy seminars on linguistic issues in legislative drafting and standardization of legal terminology used in the legislative drafting process with 146 participants attending - committee chairs, leading linguistic scholars, state officials, law enforcement officers, various agencies and ministries from the executive branch, judicial branch, President's Office, Ombudsman's Office, Prosecutor General's Office, fiscal agencies, and academia;
- Two legislative coordination and oversight seminars with 47 participants attending - a Deputy Head of the JK Administration, a Representative from the Presidential Administration's Division for Legal Services, the Deputy Representative to the JK from the Prime Minister's Administration, and heads of JK committees;
- One coordination seminar on the Legislative Drafting Process with 60 participants attending - heads of JK committee departments, Prime Minister's Office legal staff, President's Office legal staff, and Ministry of Justice legal staff.

The KPSP sent five MPs, including two Vice Speakers (2 of 5) and the Chair of the JK Committee on Agricultural Policy, Water Issues, and Local Self-Government joined by a Deputy Head (1 of 2) of the JK Administration, on a Study Tour to the US from August 4–15, 2012. The Study Tour participants first attended the National Conference of State Legislatures Annual Legislative Summit held in Chicago, Illinois on August 5–10. Subsequently, they visited the Iowa General Assembly hosted by the Iowa Legislative Services Agency in Des Moines, Iowa August 11–15. During the course of the Study Tour, the participants were exposed to an A to Z practical and working catalog of legislative affairs including bill drafting, committee work and services, oversight, constituent relations, parliamentary management, human resources management, inter-relations with other branches of government, and fiscal and budget analysis. The participants held meetings with: numerous elected state legislators and legislative staff; the Governor of Iowa; and the Secretary of Agriculture for Iowa (an elected position) as well as visiting the Des Moines constituency services offices of US Senators Charles Grassley and Tom Harkin.

The KPSP, in close cooperation with the JK Administration, Legal Department, Legal Analysis Division, and Committee on Education, Science, Culture, and Sports, prepared a Glossary of Legal Terms numbering 12,000 legal and other terms often used in the legislative drafting process with the assistance of a hired linguistic expert. During the preparation period, the KPSP involved all state agencies from the executive and judicial branches to provide suggestions and feedback on the glossary with the goal of unifying and standardizing terms used in legislative drafting. The KPSP is expecting that the Committee on Education, Science, Culture, and Sports will issue a resolution on formation of a working group, which will review the glossary and recommend its approval. Thereafter, it is expected that the JK will issue an order making the glossary and its use mandatory for all those drafting and translating legislation from the Kyrgyz legislative and executive branches.

The KPSP, with assistance of STTA Dejan Momirovic, prepared a comprehensive IT Assessment Report on the JK's IT systems functionality and needs as well as making corresponding recommendations. The report concluded that prior to moving toward consideration of the JK acquiring an Electronic Legislative Tracking System; the JK needs to address numerous IT issues including an urgent need to upgrade its server system. Absent this upgrade, the JK is at considerable risk of large-scale data loss and overall server system failure. OTI/IRG as of the drafting of this Annual Report has agreed to fund an assessment

of the costs involved in upgrading the JK server system. Afterwards, OTI/IRG will assess going forward and possibly funding the server system upgrade.

## COMPONENT 2 – COMMITTEE STRENGTHING

KPSP support and activities under this component during Year Two were focused on the (with other select committees assisted on an ad hoc need basis):

- Committee on Budget and Finance;
- Committee on International Affairs;
- Committee on Education, Science, Culture and Sports;
- Committee on Economic and Fiscal Policy;
- Committee on Human Rights, Equal Opportunities, and Public Associations (disbanded upon approval of new JK Committee structure in January 2012).

These legislative committees were chosen in close consultation with USAID. Two to four MPs from each committee were identified as a target group with other committee members and all interested MPs in general invited to attend and participate in KPSP sponsored and organized policy seminars, public hearings, field hearings, and parliamentary hearings. These events were conducted in an interactive manner including round table discussions with differing points of view represented and adequate time for committee members to pose questions to ministers, deputy ministers, other Kyrgyz executive branch officials, NGO activists, and academia in attendance. Events were also structured in such a way as to make clear and reinforce that JK committees are now the senior partners in the relationship with the corresponding executive branch ministry.



*Kyrgyz JK MPs visit a factory, which produces plastic crates, during a trip to the Free Economic Zone Sughd, Tajikistan, and the Free Economic Zone Leylek, Kyrgyzstan, June 1-2, 2012. Photo: KPSP.*

The main goal of KPSP committee related events was to seek public and civil society input and expertise and consequently make MPs more knowledgeable on a particular issue(s) prior to their decision-making and taking actions aimed at achieving the most effective solution and optimal resolution. In this manner, the KPSP utilized the existing JK Rules and Procedures on conducting policy seminars, parliamentary and public hearings, and field hearings but simultaneously sought to improve procedures being utilized thereby making discussions more substantive.

An additional main goal at KPSP committee related events and in general under Component 2 activities and initiatives was to improve the ability of the committees to exercise oversight over the executive branch's decisions and actions. In this manner, each KPSP committee event held included attendees from the executive branch charged with implementation of adopted laws as well as formulation of administrative (implementing) regulations. Such events facilitated better communications between the



committee involved and its subject ministry as well as instilled more accountability within the executive branch under the scrutiny and oversight of JK legislative committees.

JK committee department staff also constituted an additional target group receiving assistance and support under Component 2. The KPSP made use of a combination of academic and interactive educational and training approaches with committee department staff trained on methods of conducting and inputting policy analyses into legislative decision-making. JK committee staff also received training and gained direct hands on experience in how to effectively organize and structure committee events.

Under Component 2 in total during Year Two, 23 separate events attended in aggregate by 136 JK staff (72 men and 64 women) and 152 MPs (95 men and 57 women) were organized and held. The total number of participants was 1,765 (1,110 men and 665 women), including vice-prime-ministers, ministers, miscellaneous senior officials, academia, NGO activists, and experts. These events consisted of:

- Six public forums on i) the Public - Private Partnership, ii) Simplifying Kyrgyz Passport Issuance, iii) K-12 Education issues, iv) the Education Development Strategy for Kyrgyzstan 2012 – 2020, v) legislative proposals relating to the traditional Kyrgyz institution of “Kurultay” (people’s council) (*Bishkek*) and vi) the Law on Technical Schools and other educational issues;
- Five policy seminars on i) Employment for Persons with Disabilities, ii) water resources in Kyrgyzstan and Central Asia, iii) the Ex-Speakers Bureau initiative, iv) interethnic relations and v) Kyrgyz veterinary issues and prospects;
- Seven presentations for JK staff and MPs on Committee Oversight Function, Effective Oversight Mechanisms (3), Separation of Powers, Executive Power Oversight and the Iowa Legislature: the Relationship between the Executive and Legislative Branches;
- Four on site field hearings on i) Winter Tourism and Preparedness for the Upcoming Summer Season (*Karakol*), ii) legislative proposals relating to the traditional Kyrgyz institution of “Kurultay” (people’s council) (*Osh*), iii) Preserving the cultural heritage of Kyrgyzstan UNESCO list (the “Sulaiman-Too”, *Osh*) and iv) the development of free economic zones (FEZ) (*Batken*);
- Planning of a study tour to Mongolia to take place during the first month of KPSP Year Three.

In late December 2011, the KPSP finalized with OTI/IRG in providing IT equipment to the following KPSP JK committee department partners: i) Budget and Finance; ii) Youth Affairs, Physical Education, and Sport; and iii) International Affairs and Inter-Parliamentary Cooperation. The IT equipment enhanced the daily ability of these committee departments to assist their underlying committees.

The KPSP submitted two Success Stories to USAID. The first related to prior KPSP cooperation with the USAID Regional Trade Liberalization and Customs Program to better equip the then existing JK Economic Strategy, Policy Investment, and Tourism Committee Department with information technology equipment. The second corresponded to KPSP activities in providing forums and mechanisms for MPs and interested stakeholders to simplify the passport issuance process in Kyrgyzstan.

Two KPSP STTAs, Fred Bradley and John Pollak, were engaged under Component 2.

Mr. Bradley conducted the in-country portion of his assignment from April 14–28, 2012, relating to committee strengthening and improving legislative oversight. Mr. Bradley is a former MP (serving for 16 years) in the Provincial Parliament of Alberta, Canada as well as simultaneously serving (for four years) as the Provincial Minister for Environmental Affairs under the Westminster System. He also previously worked on USAID funded parliamentary strengthening programs in Ukraine and Armenia.

Mr. Pollak (Committee Services Administrator for the Iowa Legislative Services Agency of the Iowa General Assembly and a veteran of 25 years of annual four to six month sessions followed by intersessions the remainder of the year) conducted the in country portion of his STTA from June 18 – 29, 2012. He conducted trainings and gave consultations on separation of powers and prepared a how to manual on separation of powers, which was widely disseminated among MPs, JK staff, executive branch staff, and experts in governance.



Also at the request of JK Committee on Budget and Finance Chair (and former JK Speaker), Ahmatbek Keldibekov, made during a meeting between himself and KPSP staff, the KPSP engaged two short-term consultants to assist this Committee with its ongoing preparatory work in relation to the 2013 State Budget adoption process as well as a range of legislative proposals dealing with banking, commercial, and financial relations. Although the JK recessed between July and August 2012 with JK committees not meeting, committee departments continued their work including both preparing and analyzing legislative proposals as well as exercising oversight over actions taken by executive branch bodies. In this context, Chair Keldibekov found the assistance provided through these KPSP sponsored consultants to be very important in the Committee on Budget and Finance meeting its targets in terms of preparations for the 2013 State Budget adoption process.

## **COMPONENT 3 – COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION**

During Year Two, KPSP Component 3 worked closely with target groups in the dissemination of information about the activities of the JK. These consisted of JK Press Service staff, accredited parliamentary journalists, various JK committee, department, faction staff, and JK MPs. In the organization and carrying out of certain activities, the KPSP cooperated directly with the JK Press Service. The KPSP held a series of training seminars and workshops to enhance the capacity of JK Press Service staff in the field of television, radio, and web content. The KPSP aimed to improve the content of the information provided, to make it more informative, balanced, and attractive. For building constructive dialogue and better understanding between the Press Service and journalists accredited to cover Parliament, the KPSP carried out joint training sessions. In addition, the KPSP also conducted workshops focused on the JK effectively communicating with the public and civil society concerning constituent relations.

Under Component 3, the following activities were held in the course of the year. The total number of participants amounted to 185, including 98 men and 87 women. Five of these were MPs. These events consisted of:

- Training for committee department staff themed “We need to be friends with the media”. The number of participants – 11 (five men and six women);
- Joint training for JK Press Service staff and accredited parliamentary journalists on “Parliamentary correspondent is a seller of goods or an objective informant?”. The number of participants – 24 (11 men and 13 women);
- Joint training for employees of the Press Service and accredited parliamentary journalists on “The interaction of parliamentary correspondents and Press Service in conflict”. The number of participants – 23 (12 men and 11 women);
- Workshop for the Press Service on TV Graphics. The number of participants – five (all men);
- Workshop for the Press Service on Radio and Work with Audio Files. The number of participants – five (two men and three women);
- Training for accredited journalists on “Individuality in everyday life”. The number of participants – 19 (eight men and 11 women);
- Seminar for employees of JK departments and fractions on “Effective communication strategy of the JK with the public and civil society”. The number of participants – 35 (17 men and 18 women);
- Seminar for employees of JK departments and fractions on “Constituent relations and parliamentary communications”. The number of participants – 33 (15 men and 18 women);
- Seminar for JK Press Service and accredited journalists on “Effective communication strategy of the JK with the public and civil society”. The number of participants – 23 (12 men and 11 women);
- Seminar (USAID and NDI) for committee department and faction staff on “Political Marketing and PR (how to become an effective spokesperson)”. The number of participants – 22 (17 men and five women).

An additional main activity under Component 3 was preparation and dissemination of a Parliamentary Brief reporting on JK activities and events. The Parliamentary Brief was prepared in Kyrgyz, Russian, and English and issued on Tuesdays and Fridays. The Parliamentary Brief highlighted bills under consideration and voted upon by the JK as well as the activities of the JK Speaker, committees, factions, and individual MPs. In total, the KPSP during Year Two prepared 75 separate issues of the Parliamentary Brief, which were disseminated to 270 persons/entities with 180 Kyrgyz/Russian speaking persons/entities and 90 English speaking persons/entities in regular receipt.



*JK Press Service staffer Asanally uulu Nurbek creates a radio jingle at a three-day workshop on Radio and Work with Audio Files on May 2-4, 2012.*

*Photo: Door Media.*

During six months of Year Two, Component 3 also supported the project “KUSHKABAR” – news via mobile phone. A spin off organization from USAID implementer Internews, “Door Media”, implemented this project. This project aimed at the prompt transmission and dissemination of parliamentary related information through text messaging. Information included the main events, activities of the JK, its committees, and factions. Recipients of the text messages were accredited parliamentary journalists, including those from outlying regions. Information was disseminated twice per day in Russian and Kyrgyz. This project provided journalists, particularly those in the regions, with convenient, free, and prompt reports on major events at the JK.

## **COMPONENT 4 – PARLIAMENTARY MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP**

KPSP activities under Component 4 aimed to provide support and assistance to the JK Human Resources Division in creating and developing the internal capacity of the Division’s staff in the field of human resource management necessary to work more efficiently and introduce transparent procedures in hiring, evaluating, promoting, retaining, rotating, and terminating staff. Component 3 also helps to develop knowledge and capacity building skills for this Division to independently conduct stable, ongoing, and continuing training sessions for JK staff. The Component also timely and systematically evaluated the training needs of all JK staff.

Component 4 also worked closely with the staff of the JK Administration. To work more efficiently and render timely assistance, JK staff were divided into target groups: heads of sub divisions, committee experts, Administration department and division experts, and MPs Consultants and Assistants.

In order to develop and enhance professional knowledge and skills of human resources for each target group, the KPSP assessed training needs by means of questioning the basis for designing and implementing training programs for JK staff. When developing, organizing, and holding training activities, the KPSP closely worked with the JK Human Resources Division, which helped respond promptly to emerging needs.

At the request of the JK Administrative to strengthen the work of the JK Human Resources Division in regards to increased capacity in enrollment, service, promotion, tenure, and termination of civil service in accordance with the Law on Civil Service № 114 of August 11, 2004, the KPSP provided a mentor with broad experience in the field who rendered direct support to the work of the Division from April 10 to October 5, 2012.



*The KPSP holds a training on Being a Professional Manager for JK department heads and experts, May 11-13, 2012.  
Photo: KPSP.*

Over the reporting period, the KPSP, using modern and innovative training techniques and methods, conducted eight professionally informative and attractive training sessions, which expanded the overall scope and capacity of JK employees. The seminars were a great success and, at the request of JK staff, selected training subjects were repeated and replicated for several target groups, which perfectly and aptly met their needs.

The total number of participants in Component 4 trainings was 141, including 80 men and 61 women. Among them, the heads of sub departments and divisions constituted 76 people with experts and consultants constituting 65 persons:

- Training for the heads of departments and divisions on “Conflict and stress management in Human Resource Management” was conducted for two groups.
- Training for MP Consultants and Assistants on “Conflict management and work with difficult clients (voters)” was conducted for three groups.
- Training for the heads of JK Administration sub departments and divisions “On being a Professional Manager”.

At present, the KPSP is assisting in the development of the curriculum for all target groups of the JK Administration on the basis of questionnaires and assessment of the needs of each target group with regard to their functional responsibilities and needs.

## **TOTALS – EVENTS HELD AND ATTENDEES**

Under KPSP Components 1, 2, 3, and 4 in total during Year Two, 48 separate (mainly capacity building, public forums, and field hearings) types of events attended in aggregate by 2,481 persons, including 797 JK staff and 164 MPs, were successfully planned, organized, and carried out by the KPSP. All events were complemented with descriptions and photos. Written and oral feedback obtained from attendees was uniformly positive and complimentary.

## **GENDER**

Each event conducted by the KPSP involving and attended by JK staff and MPs were fully gender inclusive and integrated. In terms of JK staff, out of 2,481 overall attendees at KPSP events, 949 were

female constituting 38.3 percent of attendees. In terms of JK MPs, out of 120 MPs, 25 are female constituting 20.8 percent.

The dissolution of the former ruling majority coalition in December 2011, before which four out of 16 JK committees had been chaired by women MPs, led to the creation of the new majority coalition and a decrease in the number of JK committees to 13 with only one (the Committee on Social Policy) chaired by a female MP. However, a numerous amount of the 13 JK committees have female Vice Chairs.

Specifically, the KPSP during Year Two worked closely with women from the JK holding the following key positions:

- Vice-Speakers;
- Chair and Deputy Chair of the JK Social Policy Committee;
- Deputy Chair of the JK Education, Science, Culture, and Sports Committee;
- Deputy Chair of the JK Security and Defense Committee;
- Deputy Chair of the JK International Affairs Committee;
- Deputy Chair of the JK Human Rights, Constitutional Legislation, and State Structure Committee;
- Influential member of the JK Economic and Fiscal Policy Committee;
- Rank and file MPs;
- Head of the JK Press Service;
- Head of the JK Legal Expertise Division;
- Deputy Head of the JK Legal Department;
- Deputy Head of the JK HR Division;
- Numerous JK committee department staff;
- Numerous JK Legal Department staff;
- Numerous JK Legislative Analysis Division staff;
- Numerous JK Press Service staff;
- Numerous JK Human Resources Division staff;
- Numerous MP consultants and assistants.

The KPSP also during Year Two supported MP Ainuru Altybaeva in attending the international Women in Parliament Forum held in Athens Greece May 30 – June 2, 2012. MP Altybaeva's attendance in the Forum was very beneficial to her work in the JK as she later took over the Chair of the JK Women's Caucus.

## **PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**

At the beginning Year Two, the KPSP met numerous times with the Chairman of the JK Committee on Human Rights, Equal Opportunities, and Public Organizations, Dastan Bekeshev, who himself is a person with a visual impairment disability. As a result of these meetings and interactions with the Chair, the KPSP rendered support and assistance on the key legislative issues concerning the status of persons with disabilities. Such cooperation included the passport simplification issue (having special significance for persons with disabilities since they are often without the physical mobility necessary to collect supporting documents needed for passport receipt) and issues relating to improving existing legislation to give employers more incentives to hire persons with disabilities. Specifically, the KPSP supported this Committee in holding separate policy seminars relating to passport issuance simplification and employment of persons with disabilities.

However, this ongoing and budding cooperation was significantly complicated and then suspended due to elimination of this Committee in December 2011 as part of the overall reduction in the number of JK committees. This action was a step back in efforts within the JK to improve access to premises, services, education, and employment within Kyrgyzstan for persons with disabilities. Currently, none of the 13 JK committees has taken the lead in proactively championing issues concerning the disabled. The term and title "Human Rights" was passed on to the JK Committee on Human Rights, State Structure, and

Constitutional Legislation. To this point, this Committee has not yet conducted hearings or other types of activities concerning the disabled.

The participants on the KPSP Study Tour to the US had the opportunity to observe, inspect, and witness the construction design and architectural accommodations made over the last 20 years to make the Iowa State Capital building in Des Moines (one of the oldest capitols in the United States west of the Mississippi River) now accessible to persons with disabilities. Going back more than 20 years, the Iowa Capitol would have been much more similar to the current JK building in not being accessible or accommodating to persons with disabilities. This aspect of the Study Tour was something that impressed the participants; hence, the KPSP will look for opportunities for follow up in the coming weeks and months with the participants. In addition during Year Three, the KPSP will approach MP Bekeshev offering support to again jump start, within the JK, efforts to improve the lives of person with disabilities in Kyrgyzstan.

# COOPERATION WITH OTHER DONORS

The KPSP strictly adheres to cooperation with other USAID, EU, and United Nations donors and implementers to create donor coordination, eliminate duplication of activities, and facilitate more efficient use of resources. Looking for common synergies and ways to provide mutual assistance the parties agreed to some key principles of cooperation, which were followed in Year Two including:

- Meeting frequently;
- Exchanging work plans;
- Inviting each other to one another's trainings and events;
- Agreeing on who would work with which JK committees, with the KPSP's focus being on committees that work on economic and social issues.

The KPSP established and supported constructive working relations with a number of other USAID-funded implementers, including OTI, NDI, IRI, "REFORMA", LDP, IFES, Freedom House, the Eurasia Foundation, Internews, the Youth Project, and the American Center for International Labor Solidarity, as well as with the Resident Legal Advisor from the US Embassy. On numerous occasions the KPSP served as a bridge between these implementers and their corresponding colleagues from the JK, be it committee chairs, MPs, and/or staff.

The KPSP regularly held and participated in partner donor and implementer meetings and round tables providing an update on its ongoing and recent activities and discussing coordination and cooperation especially in terms of initiatives with the JK. KPSP staff engaged in many donor sponsored events and schools where they provided their expert opinion and/or gave respective presentations on governance and the legislative process, media and public communications and leadership. These events included:

- The Young Parliamentarians School organized by the Institute for Public Policy (IPP);
- Workshop on Strengthening Civil Society Organizations Engagement in the Policy Making Process in the Parliament of the Kyrgyz Republic organized by the Westminster Foundation for Democracy and the Embassy of the United Kingdom in Astana, Kazakhstan;
- The Club of Madrid conference on Fostering Parliamentary Democracy in the Kyrgyz Republic;
- Conference on the Role of Think Tanks and Assistance Projects in Assisting State Bodies to Make Informed Policy organized by the Tian Shan Policy Center of the American University of Central Asia;
- The School of Public Politics funded by the International Development Organization of the Netherlands;
- The Promotion of Public Policy Discussion jointly promoted by the National Endowment for Democracy and the Institute for Public Policy;
- The Promotion of Peaceful Resolution through Youth Project implemented by the Institute for Public Policy with support from UKAID (formerly DFID);
- Presentation on Proper Constitutional Division of Powers organized by the EU-UNDP Support to Legal Reform Project;
- USAID Partners Meeting, attended by all USAID funded programs, projects, and grant recipients;
- USAID D&G implementer round tables held by USAID Democracy Development and Mitigation of Conflict Office;
- Donor Coordination Meeting chaired by the JK Speaker, a Vice Speaker, and a Deputy Head of Administration.

In addition, the KPSP cooperated with UNDP, NDI, and OTI in technical support to the Jogorku Kenesh and jointly held separate programmatic events during Year Two.

NDI with assistance from the KPSP held a presentation on Press Secretary Skills, Political Marketing, and Public Relations by the visiting Head of NDI Washington's Division for Public Outreach, Kathy Gest, for public relations and outreach specialists from the Parliament, NDI, and USAID.

The KPSP partnering with OTI/IRG provided IT equipment to the JK Committee Department on Budget and Finance, Department on Education, Science, Culture and Sports, and International Affairs Department. The IT equipment upgraded the daily ability of these committee departments to assist their underlying committees.

In addition, the KPSP made a thorough IT Assessment of the JK's IT systems functionality and needs and provided corresponding recommendations. OTI/IRG has agreed to fund an assessment of the costs involved in upgrading the JK server system needed prior to the JK acquiring a desired Electronic Legislative Tracking System. Thereafter, OTI/IRG will assess going forward and possibly funding the server system upgrade.

The KSPS repeatedly briefed USAID and US Embassy in Kyrgyzstan officials on KPSP ongoing activities and plans and also recommended MPs and JK staff for the International Visitors' Program Study Trip to the US in March 2012 and separate Open World Program Study Trips to the US relating to rule of law held in September 2012.